

The Advocate

Celebrating You!

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Jackie Richardson,
Chief of Staff and Interim Director
Office of the Ombudsman and Administrative Review



2020 was an especially noteworthy year for the OOAR. As we move forward into 2021, let's do so with the same vim, vigor and adaptability displayed by all of you in 2020. This team brought outstanding services to so many Kentuckians. I encourage everyone to continue to do excellent work, set new goals and achieve great outcomes.

Most remarkable of all was that each division accomplished this by working from home, while a pandemic raged through our Commonwealth and our country faced civil and political unrest. Despite this, you all stayed on task. A big THANK YOU for our 2020 accomplishments listed below. It wouldn't have happened without you!

- ⇒ Administrative Hearings received almost 4,500 appeals and closed 4,600;
- ⇒ Constituent Services received over 2,400 requests;
- ⇒ Quality Advancement received almost 1,400 appeals and 96 reconsiderations;
- ⇒ Complaint Review Branch had 64,715 contacts addressing 74,661 different topics; and
- ⇒ Quality Control and Management Evaluation conducted 9,300 case reviews.

I truly appreciate all that you do. Continue to stay safe!

Word of the Month - Accolade *noun; plural—accolades*

- an award or privilege granted as a special honor or as an acknowledgment of merit.
- a touch on a person's shoulders with a sword at the bestowing of a knighthood.

Definitions from Oxford Languages.



Statewide Announcement:

Test your Broadband! All Kentuckians are asked to complete a 30-second Broadband Speed Test by Feb 18, 2021 to help government officials assess and plan for the future. Please go to <https://educationcabinet.ky.gov/Initiatives/Pages/KBI.aspx>.

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Employee spotlight:

Amy Noble, RD, LD

April 2021 marks Amy Noble's 11 year anniversary with the Cabinet. She started in 2010 at the Office of Inspector General ensuring state and federal regulations were enforced in long-term and acute care settings (nursing/personal care homes and hospitals). In 2012 she transferred to the Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs. There she was able to put her training and skills as both a Registered and Licensed Dietitian to work by advising families on the nutritional needs of their children. Amy started working for the Office of the Ombudsman, Quality Advancement Branch in September 2019 completing CAPTA and Service Appeals and working with clients in the state Medicaid waiver programs.



Amy has many interests including cooking, hiking, traveling, jogging, and reading. She hopes to add sky diving soon and take the leap next year! Amy also enjoys spending much of her free time with friends, family and her dog, Maggie.

SUBMISSIONS —

Please email your articles to carolyn.vose@ky.gov



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Quality Advancement Report: Richard Dienst, Branch Manager

The Quality Advancement Branch (QA) is comprised of a Branch Manager, four Citizen Assistant Specialists and one Administrative Specialist. We are best known for our work in determining hearing eligibility of citizens' appeals regarding adverse actions taken by the Cabinet. All hearing eligible appeals are then forwarded to the Division of Administrative Hearings.

QA's appeal eligibility review covers numerous issues involving the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), the Department for Medicaid Services (DMS), the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the Department for Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), including:

- **DCBS:** Protection & Permanency Service appeals; CAPTA appeals regarding child abuse and neglect findings; Caretaker Misconduct appeals involving adult abuse, neglect and exploitation by compensated caregivers; Childcare Service Appeals related to providers;
- **DMS:** Waiver appeals and reconsiderations
- **OIG:** KARES Rehabilitation Review appeals
- **DAIL:** Guardianship Trust Fund appeals

In 2019, we assumed a new initiative consolidating all Cabinet appeals within the QA Branch. This has been a slow process, but we are especially excited because the remaining DMS appeals will soon be consolidated within our Branch. The remainder of Cabinet appeals should be consolidated within our Branch over the next year.

The QA Branch also performs comprehensive reviews of services provided by other departments within the Cabinet. This task originally focused exclusively upon DCBS' Protection and Permanency services but was expanded to all Cabinet departments in 2018 with the enactment of KRS 194A.030.

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Ever wonder how Black History Month came to be? In 1926, Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950), a prominent African-American historian, educator and journalist, announced the first "Negro History Week." He selected the second week in February, which corresponded to the birthday week of two prominent Americans associated with ending slavery in the US: Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and Frederick Douglass (February 14). Woodson was inspired by a 3-week celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation he attended some years back. Initially observed in only a few communities and states, "Negro History Week" remained popular. Calls for a "Black History Month" were later raised in February, 1969 by Black educators and students at Kent State University in Ohio. The first Black History Month was held the following year at Kent State. This tradition continued to grow over the next 6 years. Finally, during the U.S. Bicentennial in 1976, President Gerald Ford urged Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." And the rest as they say is history.

